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Subject: [External] States Vow to Fight Trump's 'Disastrous' Offshore Drilling Plans and more

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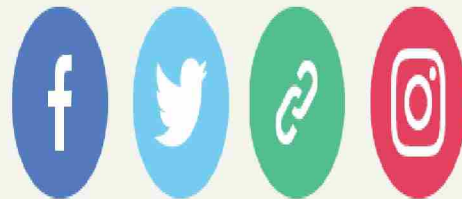
States Vow to Fight Trump's 'Disastrous' Offshore Drilling Plans and more

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January 15, 2018

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"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in." ~ Rachel Carson

\$306bn in One Year: US Bill for Natural Disasters Smashes Record

With three strong hurricanes, wildfires, hail, flooding, tornadoes and drought, the United States tallied a record high bill last year for weather disasters: \$306bn, according to a new government report released on Monday.



The US had 16 disasters last year with damage exceeding a billion dollars, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Noaa) said. That ties 2011 for the number of billion-dollar disasters, but the total cost blew past the previous record of \$215bn in 2005. Read more at [The Guardian](#)

States Vow to Fight Trump's 'Disastrous' Offshore Drilling Plans



According to the [Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's](#) National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program (OCS) for 2019-2023, nearly the whole of U.S.

Coastal areas will be opened up to drilling, apart from one coastal planning area, reflecting a "key aspect of the implementation of President Donald Trump's America-First Offshore Energy

Strategy."

The Draft Proposed Program includes 47 potential lease sales in 25 of the 26 planning areas—19 sales off the coast of Alaska, 7 in the Pacific Region, 12 in the Gulf of Mexico and 9 in the Atlantic Region. To read further, check out [EcoWatch](#)

Atlantic Coast Pipeline Hits More Delays in North Carolina

North Carolina regulators Wednesday announced the latest round of setbacks for the 600-mile Atlantic Coast Pipeline — delaying a decision on the project's clean water certificate until as late as February and postponing several other environmental permits.



Virginia-based Dominion Resources had hoped to break ground last year on the \$5.5 billion pipeline, slated to transport natural gas from West Virginia into Virginia and the Tar Heel state. Duke Energy, which seeks fuel for its gas-fired power plants, is the venture's second major investor. Read more at [South East Energy News](#)

Florida's Exemption From Offshore Drilling Plan

Called 'Political Stunt'



The [Trump](#) administration will exclude Florida from its controversial [offshore oil drilling](#) plan after a plea from the state governor, Rick Scott.

"I support the governor's position that Florida is unique and its coasts are heavily reliant on tourism as an economic driver," Interior Sec. [Ryan Zinke](#) said Tuesday. "As a result of discussion with Governor Scott and his leadership, I am removing Florida from consideration for any new oil and gas platforms."

President Trump's proposal to massively expand offshore oil and natural gas drilling off the Pacific and Atlantic coasts [drew criticism](#) from liberals and conservatives alike, who warn that such operations at sea could expose coastal areas to the risks of blowouts, explosions, catastrophic spills and [seismic blasting](#).

Read more at [EcoWatch](#).

Empire State Building Shines Green After NYC's Decision to Take on Fossil Fuel Industry

New York City's iconic Empire State Building glowed green Wednesday night following two "[watershed](#)" [announcements](#)—that the city would seek to [divest](#) its pension funds from fossil fuel investments, and that it filed suit against five oil giants for contributing to [climate change](#)."The Empire State Building is shining



green tonight because it's time to put our planet first. #DivestNY," Democratic Mayor Bill de Blasio tweeted Wednesday.

The Belgium-based European Green Party also chimed in and advocated for European leaders to follow the Big Apple's footsteps. "Let's join #DivestNY and #DivestEurope for a Green and sustainable future for us and generations to come," the party said on social media. Read more at [EcoWatch](#).

Species Extinction In Farmlands: It's Not Just The Birds And The Bees



Industrial agriculture. Exposed fields that reach the horizons alternate with endless rows of corn that blur like a flip-book as you drive by. If you were to stop and touch it, the dirt in these fields would fall through your fingers like sand. This type of food production relies on synthetic chemicals and heavy mechanization. These fields are inhospitable; the only life likely to be found are monocrops, meticulously bred,

planted, and controlled by humans.

Agriculture—the vast majority of it industrial—covers over [one third of the earth's surface](#). The soils, fields, adjacent streams, and skies above industrial farms were once the home of diverse flora and fauna, from microscopic to large mammals. But today, [farming is the number one threat to wildlife](#). These ecosystems have been disrupted and fields are more akin to wastelands. Take a further look at [Green America](#).

‘Big Organic’ Egg Producers Poised to Feather their Nests if USDA Scuttles Animal Welfare Rule

If nutritional quality and animal welfare issues factor into your egg-buying decisions, get ready for more bad news out of the Trump administration's U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USDA plans to [ditch rules](#), finalized under

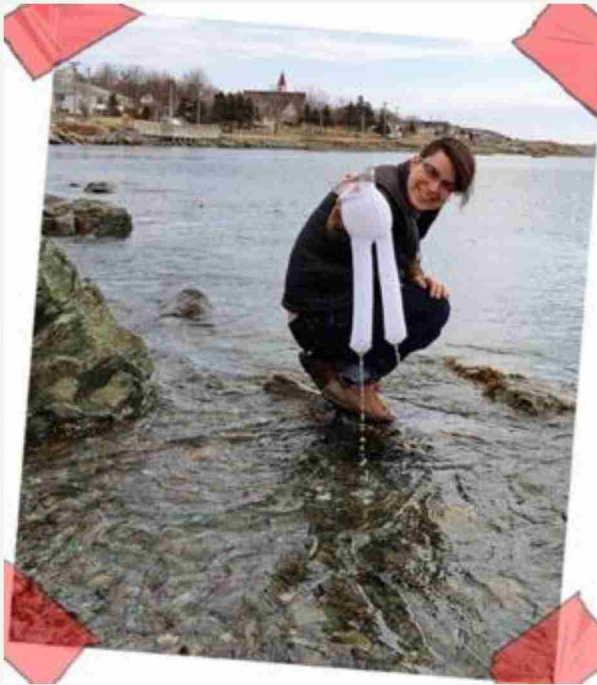


the Obama Administration, that would have required organic egg producers to provide hens with more space and more outdoor access.

The [Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices \(OLPP\) Rule](#) was the result of a 14-year effort by the [National Organic Standards Board \(NOSB\)](#) to tighten up animal welfare rules for organic egg producers.

Learn more about your future egg options at [Organic Consumers Association](#)

Punk Science Do-it-Yourself Science is Taking Off



BabyLegs, as Ms Liboiron has dubbed her contraption, is the sort of do-it-yourself kit being used by an increasing number of concerned citizens seeking to monitor the soil, water and air. Such tools are typically cheaper than the professionals' alternatives. The Manta Trawls with which scientists skim the oceans for microplastics start at around US\$3,500.

BabyLegs, which you can put together yourself using instructions

from Ms Liboiron's Civic Laboratory for Environmental Action Research (CLEAR), costs just a few dollars. Learn more about "BabyLegs" at

[NatureTech.Solutions](https://naturetechsolutions.com/babylegs)

Jordan Cove LNG and Pacific Connector Pipeline Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This paper provides an estimate of the full lifecycle emissions of the project, calculating a reference and



high case estimate using the best available information. It finds that the project would add significantly to greenhouse gas emissions both globally and within the state of Oregon. Annual emissions in the Reference Case are 36.8 million metric tons. This is equivalent to over 15 times the 2016 emissions from Oregon's only remaining coal plant, the Boardman coal plant, which is scheduled to close in 2020 because of climate and air pollution concerns. Emissions in the high case are 52 million metric tons annually. Read more at [Oil Change International](#) or explore the [full report here](#).

The Rachel Carson Council, founded in 1965, is the national environmental organization envisioned by Rachel Carson to carry on her work after her death. We promote Carson's ecological ethic that combines scientific concern for the environment and human health with a sense of wonder and reverence for all forms of life in order to build a sustainable, just, and peaceful future.

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